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A Historical Study of Prostitution

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Abstract: Since the beginning of time, the history of romantic relationships between men and women has been one of the most fascinating and complex. Hugging and sexual intercourse between men and women is an example of a romantic act that can take many forms. Different countries' policies on prostitution, such as legal and illegal forms, have been widely disseminated. Various forms of prostitution, such as consensual and forced prostitution, will be discussed here. Every country and every type of society has had some form of prostitution at some point in its history. It is an age old social evil. Kautilya in Arthashastra refers to the ganikas as an indispensable factor in royal courts and in India, it became institution in the post Vedic period Prostitution was an organized profession and was a source of revenue to the State in ancient times. A prostitute is a woman who sells herself for sexual purpose to a great number of men in succession and with little or no choice among them. This article is prepared through analytical and archival method of research.

Keywords: **Devdasi, Egypy, Prostitution, Rome, Women,**

1. INTRODUCTION:

Humans are thought to have a natural desire for sex. Getting to know one another in a social setting exposes one to this concept. As a result of this education, students gain a better understanding of sexual relations between men and women as well as their own personal views on the subject. They also gain a better understanding of sexual norms within the context of the individual's family and social environment. Will Durant suggested that despite significant differences in the laws defining sexual behaviour, including the relationship between men and women and those prohibiting prostitution, reprehensible moral abnormalities pervaded all mediaeval societies.[1]

More than 4,000 years ago, the phenomenon first appeared in Egyptian history, and it spread to the cultures of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and the Iberians as well. Religious beliefs were more closely associated with the earliest form of prostitution. A sacrificial practise in the post-AD era, parents sent their beautiful girls or boys to sacred places for sexual relations involving the touching of their intimate parts by priests and votaries. In temples, young women

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would clap their hands and stamp their feet as a sign of devotion and offer their hearts to the gods. The pyramid temples would be strengthened by integrating the guests' breaths with their own. Throughout the ages, people believed that by abusing their daughters, they were able to purchase the indulgence, which was interpreted as a ticket to heaven.[2]

Objectives

The objectives of the study are to explore the historical background of Prostitution in some ancient civilizations of the world and to reach a better identification of women's status in India, and finally, preventing prostitution.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study is a type of archival or primary research which involves diverse evidence from Indian and Iranian archival records. It has been hunted through the 32 of documents relevant to the types of prostitution and status of women in the different periods of history such as Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome. This study lies at the heart of academic and other forms of original historical studies. It also focused on the different types of prostitution in the analytical point of view. Accordingly, the data are of library type and the method is analytical. The contribution of the current study is identifying the circumstances of prostitution in India and better understanding of the status of women engaging this social issue, including consensual and forced prostitution in this country.

Women's Status in Different Civilisations

Women's Status in Mesopotamia: Men and women had very different rights in Mesopotamia. Women's rights included the ability to freely socialise in public commercial spaces. They could also participate in social events and own property. Women's status in Mesopotamia varied from place to place and time to time. Women's rights differed greatly depending on the social class they belonged to, ranging from the upper echelons of society to the lower echelons. During the Assyrian era, women's power and independence were greatly impacted by this. For centuries, young women worked in the temple as maids, concubines, and as earthly representatives of the gods. It was an honour for fathers to sacrifice their own daughters for the sake of their faith. Girls were sometimes given to temples as soon as they were born by their parents. While men's prostitution was tolerated in Sumerian society, women's prostitution was regarded with grave concern and was punishable by death if found out. Since women were only expected to have sexual relations with their own husbands, this was a cultural norm.

The Sumerians, who had been the driving force behind eastern civilisation, were overtaken by Babylonians around 1750 BC. During Babylonian times, women were men's most prized possessions. To ensure their daughters' happiness, fathers were able to dictate who could marry their daughters and at what price. For women, marriage was strictly monogamous, whereas for men, prostitutes and concubines were available, as well as their legitimate spouses. At least once in a woman's lifetime, she must visit the Aphrodite temple and expose herself to a foreign man. This was noted by Herodotus as one of Babylon's most offensive customs and worships that would draw the attention of an outsider.[3] A night in the temple was thought to be necessary for the Babylonians before they were allowed to marry and settle down with their

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families. In order to enter the temple and present their divinely gifted ornaments, the girls placed one of their most prized possessions behind each of seven doors. In order to fulfil their religious obligations, they had no choice but to do this.

At some point between 600 and 900 B.C., a civilization called Assyria rose in Mesopotamia. In Assyrian civilisation, women's individual independence was markedly reduced. Most rules of this civilization during the middle ages dealt with women and imposed numerous restrictions on them. These were apparently Hammurabi rules in their retrieved form, in which women were classified according to the types of sexual activities they engaged in. Female servants of men, or those who met their sex needs, or those who were supported by them were required to wear face veils and identify themselves as the man's property. Slave women and concubines were exempt from wearing a face veil because they were not legally bound to a man. The face veil, in effect, symbolised a woman's liberation.

Women's Status in Greece: When it came to women's rights, Greeks had varying views. Somesaw them as the protectors of the people. Thus, they were held in high esteem. In order to maintain their innocence, women were shielded from the men's lustful gaze. It was their parents' decision whether or not their daughters married, and they had no say in the matter at all. Women's views were viewed in a less positive light by others. Females were viewed as animals who had taken on human form and were a source of chaos by Symonides, a well-known writer. According to him, women are sexual creatures who "cannot control their sexuality; they must therefore be limited," he wrote. Men's physical and sexual power, as well as their food and wealth, were drained by "women," according to Symonides. They were the source of all vices. But without them, "society would be annihilated." Procreation is the primary function of women according to the majority of men. As a result of these images, men may believe that women in this social stratum are nothing more than a commodity to be exploited for their sexual pleasures.[4]

The status of Greek women was a major factor in their ability to find work, freedom, and independence. Women in Greece were categorised into three distinct groups. Married women who had to stay home and raise their own children were the first group to be affected by this new policy. Married women were considered respectable and entitled to certain social privileges, but they were only permitted to appear in public when performing religious services. This included concubines whose roles in society had yet to be defined. As it turned out, they were actually freed slaves, widows, and girls who had been enticed into prostitution. This group of women was unrestricted by society's norms or any particular law. As a third category, women who were better educated than their spouses. If they were paid well by the men, they served as escorts at ceremonies and parties for the men.[5] Hetaira were more than just sex slaves for men; they also aided them in their social and intellectual development. Even though they didn't have the social advantages of prostitutes, they were sometimes used as wives by men. Despite this, the children they had were illegitimate and did not have the same rights as other citizens. More than married women, they were free to partake in social activities such as dancing, singing, and other forms of music, and they also engaged in philosophical and intellectual debates.

Ancient Rome*:* Prostitution was legal, open, and widespread in ancient Rome. Even the most powerful Roman men were free to engage prostitutes of either sex without moral repercussions

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as long as they exercised self-control and moderation in the frequency and enjoyment of sex. Prostitutes are frequently mentioned in Latin literature.[6] Provisions of Roman law that regulate prostitution, as well as inscriptions, particularly graffiti from Pompeii, document real-world practises. Some large brothels appear to have been counted as tourist attractions and possibly even state-owned in the 4th century, when Rome was becoming officially Christianized. Prostitutes were involved in a number of Roman religious rituals, particularly during the month of April, when the love and fertility goddess Venus presided. Prostitutes, on the other hand, were despised: most were slaves or former slaves, or if born free, were relegated to the infames, people with no social standing and denied access to most of the protections afforded to citizens under Roman law. Prostitution thus reflects Romans' mixed feelings about pleasure and sexuality.

A meretrix was a registered prostitute, while prostibulae was the general term for unregistered prostitutes. Although there were some parallels with the Greek system, as the Empire grew, foreign slaves were increasingly captured, purchased, or raised for the purpose, sometimes by large-scale "prostitute farmers" who took abandoned children. Adopted children were almost always brought up as prostitutes.[7] Criminal free women were occasionally enslaved into prostitution as a legal punishment. Buyers could inspect naked men and women for sale in private, and there was no stigma attached to a male aristocrat purchasing males.

Devadasi System in India*:* A discussion of prostitution in India would be incomplete without mentioning the devadasis, a special class of women.[8] Devadasis, or temple dancing girls, have been taught music and dance with a wealth of detailed technique for centuries. They had financial security because they were hereditary temple employees. They also had the benefit of being taught by technically competent traditional teachers. Unfortunately, the system deteriorated, and devadasis became associated with prostitution. The Devadasi system plays an important role in India's prostitution history. Devadasi literally means "servants of God" and may have originally referred to a group of women who dedicated their lives to religious service and austerities. Temple singers, dancers, concubines, and prostitutes were frequently used by devadasis who were not supposed to marry. Devadasi became a euphemistic term for women who prostitution in the name of religion[9]. According to a report in the Times of India (10-11- 1987), the Devadasi system was established as a result of a conspiracy between the feudal class and the priests. With their ideological and religious sway over the peasants and craftsmen, the latter devised a way to give prostitution religious legitimacy. Poor, low-caste girls were sold at private auctions before being dedicated to temples.[10] After that, they were forced into prostitution. According to a report published in the Times of India on November 10, 1987, the practise of dedicating young dalit girls (Mahars, Mangs, Dowris, and Chambhar) to a goddess as children and initiating them into prostitution when they reach puberty is still practised in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and other parts of South India. According to a study by two doctors from the India Health Organization, this is largely due to social backwardness, poverty, and illiteracy.

Factors Leading To Prostitution

A survey of prostituted women in India reveals their reasoning for staying in prostitution (in descending order of significance): poverty/ unemployment; lack of proper reintegration services, lack of options; stigma and adverse social attitudes; family expectations

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and pressure; resignation and acclimation to the lifestyle. (CATW - Asia Pacific, Trafficking in Women and Prostitution in the Asia Pacific).[11] Most of the research done by Sanlaap (an NGO) indicates that the majority of sex workers in India work as prostitutes due to lacking resources to support themselves or their children. Most do not choose this profession out of preference, but out of necessity, often after the breakup of a marriage or after being disowned and thrown out of their homes by their families. The children of sex workers are much more likely to get involved in this kind of work as well.

Poverty's Role in Indian Prostitution

Material poverty is one of India's most striking features. India's poverty rate is estimated to be around 40 percent of the population. A lack of basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter means that nearly 400 million people are at risk of starving to death. Overwhelming, almost incomprehensible data.[12] Gender and sex disparities aren't caused by poverty. Only worsens existing power imbalances and increases the vulnerability of those who are targeted by gender bias. Females and female children are disproportionately affected in societies where patriarchy is in place. It is clear that caste warfare and political strife, as well as domestic conflicts that result from these conflicts, reflect a deep-seated bias against women. An attack on a woman's physical or sexual well-being is not the same as an attack on a man's. In the eyes of the state, community, and society, it has become a tool of political statement for aggression and gender persecution, which reflects amply on the degree of human degradation and commodityization of women. A world in which the "wealthy" are guaranteed to meet their basic needs is an almost surreal one. India's impoverished appear to be living in a state of constant anxiety. The root of India's prostitution problem is often attributed to the country's extreme poverty. Women may prostitute themselves in order to acquire material goods that they otherwise couldn't afford. Even if basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter are met, some young women turn to prostitution in order to fulfil their aspirations for greater financial security.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Consensual prostitutes earn money directly from customers, while forced prostitutes do not have direct contact with customers and do not earn as much because a significant portion of their earnings goes to the procurers, brothels, and other actors involved in the prostitution business. Prostitution causes a slew of social, cultural, and economic issues, as well as negative and destructive effects on the individual and the family. Due to rising AIDS-related concerns and reports of young girls being abducted and forced into prostitution, prostitution is on the rise in India. Children of prostitutes are also at risk of being abused in this manner. For male customers, children are compelled to perform songs and dances, and some are even forced to perform sexual services. There are three common ways that women in India end up in the sex trade. Devadasi devotion; 2) lying; and 3) bad marriages or families are all examples of dishonesty. Some women have been married since 1997. As a result, the children of sex workers are much more likely to engage in this type of work, as well. Of the 160 women who were interviewed by the All Bengal Women's Union, 23 said they had entered the sex trade on their own, while the other 137 said they had been introduced to it by agents.

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